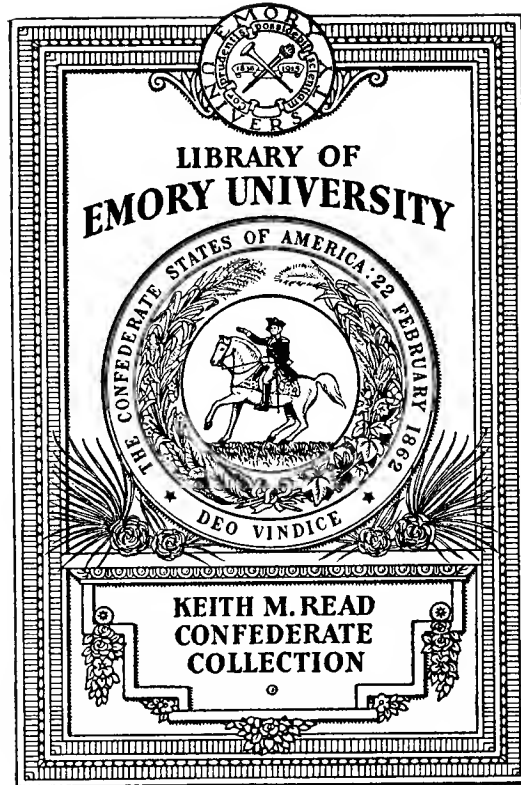


AN EXPOSITION,
&c. &c.

PART SECOND.

THE THINGS
OF
THE KINGDOM OF GOD,
AND
THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST,

PETERSBURG:
PRINTED BY A. F. CRUTCHFIELD & CO., BANK STREET.
1863.



AN EXPOSITION,
&c. &c.

PART SECOND.

THE THINGS
OF THE
THE KINGDOM OF GOD,
AND
THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST,

PETERSBURG:
PRINTED BY A. F. CRUTCHFIELD & CO., BANK STREET.
1863.

AN EXPOSITION,

&c., &c.

Part Second.

THE THINGS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

The truth indicated.—None but the believers of the truth can inherit the Kingdom of God.—Abraham “the Heir of the World.”—To inherit with him, men must believe what he believed; and become his children by adoption through Jesus Christ.—The Gospel and the things of the Kingdom one and the same.—It was preached to Abraham, Israel, and the Gentiles, by the Lord God, by Moses, by Jesus, and by the Apostles.—Gospel things susceptible of a threefold classification.—The Keys of the Kingdom.—Entrusted only to Peter.—The Mystery of the Kingdom.—The Fellowship of the Mystery.—“Apostolic Succession.”—Qualifications of an apostle of Christ.—Import of the phrase, “the end of the world.”—“The sign” of its approach.—The Gospel preached to every creature by the Apostles.—Modern missionaryism inadequate to the end proposed.

In the former part of this work, I have shown that it has been the purpose of God from the foundation of the world, to set up a kingdom and empire of nations, which shall supersede all others previously existing upon the globe. We have now arrived at that part of our subject which relates to the development of this *imperial constitution of the world*, which when brought to the birth, will have occupied six days of a thousand years each in its formation. No topic can surpass this in interest and importance to every man that breathes the breath of life. God has made the belief of the things concerning it a condition of partaking in the glory, honor, and incorruptibility which belong to it. Whatever ignorance may be overlooked, ignorance of the things pertaining to this kingdom alienates men from the life of God. This is equivalent to saying, that no man can attain to eternal life who does not believe the gospel; for the subject matter of the gospel is this very kingdom which it is the purpose of God to establish for the Son of Man and the saints.

It is of primary importance that we believe the truth, and not a substitute for it; for it is by the truth only we can be saved; “the truth as it is in Jesus,” neither more nor less, is that to which our attention is invited in the word. “The

truth" is set forth in the law and the prophets; but we must add to these the apostolic testimony contained in the New Testament, if we would comprehend it "*as it is in Jesus.*" The kingdom is the subject matter of "the truth;" but "*as it is in Jesus,*" is the truth concerning him as the king and supreme pontiff of the dominion; and *the things concerning his name* as taught in the doctrine of the apostles. As a whole "the truth" is defined as "*the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ.*"¹ This phrase covers the entire ground upon which the "*one faith,*" and the "*one hope,*" of the gospel are based; so that if a man believe only the "*things of the kingdom,*" his faith is defective in the "*things of the name;*" or, if his belief be confined to the "*things of the name,*" it is deficient in the "*things of the kingdom.*" There can be no separation of them recognised in a "*like precious faith*"² to that of the apostles. They believed and taught all these things; God hath joined them together, and no man need expect his favour who separates them; or abolishes the necessity of believing the things he has revealed for faith.

There can be no doubt of the truth of these statements in view of Paul's emphatic declaration that, "though we (apostles) or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached unto you, *let him be accursed.*" As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."³ Here, then, he pronounces a curse upon even an angel, if he should come and offer to us any other gospel than that which was preached by himself and the other apostles. It is our wisdom, therefore, to receive nothing which has not the sanction of their authority. Paul styles every thing else but what he preached, "*another gospel,*" that is, "*a perversion of the gospel of Christ;*" and as we can only be saved by belief of the truth, such a gospel is both useless and injurious.

"*Gospel*" is a word which signifies *good news*, or glad tidings, and *the gospel* some particular good news. "*Blessed,*" say the scriptures, "*are they who know the joyful sound,*" or the gospel; and the reason is, because it makes known the "*blessedness*" which is to come upon the nations, and will give every one an interest in it who believes and accepts it. The gospel of God is the good news of blessedness promised in the scriptures of the prophets; and *summarily* expressed in the saying, "In thee, Abraham, shall all nations of the

¹ Acts viii. 12. ² 2 Pet. i. 1. ³ Gal. i. 8.

earth be blessed." The making of this promise to Abraham is termed by Paul, the preaching of the gospel to Abraham; for, says he, "the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith preached before the gospel to Abraham, saying, 'in thee shall all nations be blessed.'"¹ This, he styles "the blessing of Abraham," which is to come upon the nations through Jesus Christ. Abraham holds a conspicuous place in relation to the blessedness of the gospel. He is named by Paul six times in the third chapter of Galatians, which he concludes by saying, "if ye be Christ's, then are ye *Abraham's seed* and *heirs* according to the promise." Hence, men are required to be Christ's that they may be Abraham's seed. But why is it so important to be of the seed of Abraham? For the very obvious reason, that as the promise was made to Abraham, it is only by being *constitutionally* "in him" that any son of Adam can obtain a participation in what belongs to Abraham.

This idea may be illustrated by reference to the law of inheritance among all civilized people. If a man be possessed of an estate, the members of his family alone have any right to it at his decease. Though all the world may be his friends, unless they are named in his will, they can have no part in the inheritance he may leave behind. And again, if he have no heir, his estate and property would escheat to the lord of whom he happened to hold his title; but, to avoid this, it would be quite competent for him to *adopt an heir* according to the law. The person so adopted would become his seed in every respect save that of natural birth. In the case before us God hath promised an estate to Abraham; therefore he is styled "**THE HEIR OF THE WORLD**,"—that is, of the glory, honor, and power, of the nations throughout the globe in their millennial blessedness—a gift worthy of Him that hath *promised* it. Now the promise of this to Abraham and his seed, is a promise to no one else. No stranger can lay claim to it. He must be Abraham's seed, or he has no right to Abraham's property. On this principal, no one who is not a lineal, or fleshly, descendant of Abraham can inherit the world with him when God fulfils the promise. This is the view taken of the matter by the Jews, who found their hope of participation in the world when it becomes Abraham's and his seed's, upon the acknowledged fact, that they are Abraham's flesh and blood. This would be very well, if no other condition of inheritance were specified. But the word saith, that "the chil

¹ Gal. iii. 8.

dren of the flesh are not the children of God ; but the children of the promise (*those who believe it*) are counted for the seed."¹ If the children of the flesh had a right to share with Abraham when he obtains possession of the world which God has promised him, then all descended from Ishmael and Esau, his son and grandson, as well as from Isaac, would have equal rights. But God, who not only promises the estate, but specifies the conditions of heirship, has restricted the inheritance to those termed the "children of the promise as Isaac was."² He has proclaimed the great truth that "the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman."³ To be a son of the free-woman, a man, although a Jew, must *believe in the promise made to Abraham* ; he must be of a like disposition with Abraham ; he must be obedient like Abraham ; he must have faith in Jesus as the seed of Abraham associated with him in the promise ; he must believe in his name ; he must be constitutionally inducted into Christ by immersion into the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit :—being the subject of these conditions he is included in the Family of God, to whose members it is said "ye are all the children of God in Christ Jesus through the faith. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is no distinction of Jew or Gentile, bond, or free, male, or female, among you : for ye are all *one* in Christ Jesus. And *if* ye be Christ's, *then* are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."⁴ These are the children of the promise, the children of God, the brethren and joint-heirs of Jesus Christ, the sons of the free woman, and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob's seed, who are alone entitled to possess the world with him.

Jesus came to preach the gospel. "The Spirit of the Lord," saith he, "is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." It is admitted, then, that Jesus fulfilled his mission ; consequently, in his proclamation, he preached the *good news of the acceptable season*, or BLESSED ERA of the Lord. But, what was the great focal truth of this acceptable year ? Let Jesus answer the question in his own words ; "*I must preach the kingdom of God, for therefore am I sent* ;"⁵ and so much did he preach about this kingdom, that the people became impatient, and sought to take him by force and make him King. But he would not permit it ; "and because they thought that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear, he spake a parable to them," in which he gave them to understand, that

¹ Rom. ix. 8. ² Gal. iv. 28. ³ Gal. iv. 30. ⁴ Gal. iii. 26. ⁵ Luke iv. 19.

⁶ Luke v. 43.

he must first take a journey into a far country to be presented before the Ancient of Days to receive from Him the kingdom, and then to return; when he would bestow upon his servants power and authority over the cities of the world.¹ According to this arrangement, Jesus rose from the dead and took his departure; when he ascended to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, where he is now. He has not yet received the kingdom, glory, and dominion, or he would have already returned. He is waiting for this, "sitting at the right hand of God *until* his foes are made his footstool."² He will then appear in his kingdom and rule as King over all the earth.

The gospel, then, was preached to Abraham by the angel of the Lord; and it was preached by Jesus to his own nation, and to them only; for "he was not sent save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."³ Paul also declares that it was preached to that generation of Israelites whose carcasses fell in the wilderness; but it did not profit them *because they did not believe it*.⁴ Therefore, God swore in his wrath that they should not enter into the rest it proclaimed.⁵ Before he suffered on the accursed tree, Jesus sent his apostles, and seventy others throughout the land, to "preach *the kingdom* of God." In recording their obedience to his command, Luke says, "they went through the towns preaching *the gospel*;"⁶ so that it is clear, that to preach the kingdom is to preach the gospel; and to preach the gospel is to preach the kingdom of God.

This is a most important demonstration; for it enables us to determine when we hear the gospel. The gospel is not preached when the things of the kingdom are omitted. And this is one grand defect in modern preaching. Either there is nothing said about the kingdom; or a kingdom is preached which is a mere matter of speculation: a kingdom of heaven in principle, in the hearts of men, or somewhere beyond the skies! But, the gospel does not treat of such a kingdom as this; a mere fiction indoctrinated into men's minds by "the cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive." So inseparable is the idea of gospel from that of kingdom, that we find them, not only substituted for each other, but associated together as terms of explanation. Thus, "Jesus went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing *the glad tidings of the kingdom of God*;"⁷ and in the prophecy of Mount Olivet, it is written, "*THIS gospel of the kingdom* shall be preached in all the habitable (*Roman empire*) for a testimony to all the nations; and then shall come the end."⁸ After he rose from the dead, he commanded the apostles, saying, "go preach

¹ Dan. vii. 13, 14; Luke xix. 11—17; Dan. vii. 18, 27. ² Ps. cx. 1. ³ Matt. xv. 24.

⁴ Heb. iv. 2. ⁵ Heb. iii. 18, 19. ⁶ Luke ix. 2, 6. ⁷ Luk. viii. 1; Mark i. 14.

⁸ Matt. xxiv. 14.

the gospel to every creature : he that believes and is immersed shall be saved ; and he that believes not shall be condemned ;" and "lo, I am with you all the days until the end of the world." In view of these texts, can any one be so mistified as not to see, that salvation is predicated on believing the gospel of the kingdom, and being baptized into Jesus Christ? They were to preach "*this* gospel of the kingdom" in the name of Jesus ; how did they execute the work? "They went forth, and preached everywhere, *the Lord working with them*, and confirming THE WORD with signs following."¹ They began at Jerusalem, passed throughout Judea, then went to Samaria, and lastly, to the end of the land. They began on the day of Pentecost, and preached only to the Jews for several years ; at the end of which, Peter and Paul began to proclaim the kingdom to Gentiles also. The labors of the apostles were indefatigable. They filled the Roman empire with their doctrine ; and made such an impression upon it, that tumults were excited ; and they were charged with treason against the state, because they proclaimed another king than Cæsar ;² who should rule the world in righteousness² as the sovereign Lord of all the earth. "They spake the word of God with boldness." "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul ;" and great kindness was among them all. In about thirty years, the gospel of the kingdom was proclaimed in all the world, to every creature under the heaven.³ They finished their work, and fell asleep ; the Lord having abundantly fulfilled his promise of co-operating with them to the end of the world.

Thus, the same gospel that was preached to Abraham, was preached also to Jews and Gentiles by the Apostles after the ascension of Jesus to the right hand of power. There was, however, this difference ; when it was preached to Abraham, and to the generation which perished in the Wilderness, *it was altogether a matter of promise* ; but when preached by the apostles to the Roman nations *some things connected with the promise were fulfilled* : so that, the gospel of the kingdom as they preached it, was partly a matter of promise, partly a matter of history, and partly doctrinal. It was thus presented to mankind in a threefold point of view, which may be stated in this form :—

I. Promises to be fulfilled ; or, things concerning the kingdom of God ;

II. Promises fulfilled already ; or, things concerning Jesus :

III. The doctrinal import of the fulfilled promises ; or, things concerning his Name.

¹ Mark xvi. 20. ² Acts. xvii, 7, 31. ³ Col. i. 6, 23.

A man might believe all the promises and their doctrinal import, but if he did not believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the subject of them, he would make a very good believing Jew under the law, but he would not be a Christian under grace. This is the great turning point in the faith of an enlightened Jew, and Christian. Is Jesus of Nazareth the personage described in the law and the prophets, has he right and title to the throne of David, and to the dominion of the world? The Jew says, "no; we look for another;" but the Christian replies, "he unquestionably is the person: we look for no other; but assuredly expect the re-appearance of this same Jesus' on earth, to restore the throne and Kingdom of David; to occupy them as the King of the Jews; and to be the Messiah, High Priest and Ruler of the nations." Hence, it is the foundation truth of the gospel of the kingdom, that Jesus of Nazareth is the appointed King, and Son of the living God.

Things which of Israel; whose power was according to the law as on the throne of their kingdom. The light of the glorious day.

whole years in Rome "the great city" at Jesus' birth. The scriptearth. They believe.

son; and find their origin in us, it must be known. Their minds and reprobate consciences' descendants be-

When the Apostles preached to Israel from John to announced that God had raised up the calling of the of David.¹ In the porch of the temple. "The law and that God would send Jesus Christ to do his God's will was restitution.² When Philip preached to the Samaritans, he announced the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ.³ In the convention of the apostles and elders, James invited their attention to Peter's narrative and the prediction of his. He stated that the work to be done was to take out of the nations a people for the name of God, as it is written, "AFTER THIS I will return, and raise up the dwelling place of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and all the Heathen which are called by my name. And I will bring again the captivity of my people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have

¹ Acts ii. 30. ² Acts iii. 21. ³ Acts viii. 12.

given them, saith the Lord."¹ In Athens, Paul announced that God intended to rule the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ; and that he had raised him from the dead as an assurance of its verity.² In the Ephesian synagogue he disputed for three months, persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.³ Paul stood at the bar of Agrippa, and was judged "for the hope of the promise made of God unto the fathers; unto which promise the twelve tribes of Israel, instantly serving God, day and night, hope to come."⁴ Hence, he preached the hope of Israel's twelve tribes, as set forth in Amos, and all the prophets; and directed their attention to Jesus as the personage whom God had raised up to accomplish their desire. Indeed, he told the Jews at Rome plainly, that he was a prisoner in chains on account of the hope of Israel; and in illustration of it, "he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, both out of the law of Moses and the prophets, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ." According to the law and the testimony he spoke, diffusing the light of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, for two whole years in Rome, "the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth."⁵

To understand the relations of things, it must be known that the gospel stands related to Abraham's descendants before the preaching of John the Baptist to Israel from John to the day of Pentecost; from this epoch until the calling of the Gentiles; and then to the Gentiles at large. "The law and the prophets were until John, then the kingdom of God was proclaimed" to Israel by John, Jesus, the seventy, and the twelve. There was "*a mystery*," however, connected with the gospel which was not manifested in the proclamation of it before the day of Pentecost. The people were taught in parables, but the apostles were favored with an interpretation of them in private; for, said Jesus to them, "to you it is given to know the *mystery of the kingdom of God*, but to them it is not given."⁶ Referring to this, Paul says, "my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of *the mystery*, which was kept secret since the world began. But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."⁷ "Pray for me," says he, "that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known *the mystery of the gospel*, for which I am an ambassador in bonds."⁸ Again, "by revelation God hath made known

¹ Acts xv. 14-18; Amos ix. 11. ² Acts xvii. 31. ³ Acts xix. 8; xx. 20, 21-25, 27.

⁴ Acts xxvi. 6, 7. ⁵ Acts xxviii. 20, 23, 31. ⁶ Mark iv. 2; Matt. xiii. 11.

⁷ Rom. xvi. 25, 26. ⁸ Eph. vi. 19.

unto me, Paul, *the mystery*, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, *as it is now revealed* unto the holy apostles and prophets by the spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel. To me was given to make all men see what is the **FELLOWSHIP** of *the mystery* which from the beginning of the world, (*from the beginning of the ages*) hath been hid in God, by whom all things were created for Jesus Christ. To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the high places might be made known through the church the multifarious wisdom of God."¹

From these writings, we learn that the gospel of the kingdom of God is a phrase which embraces the whole subject; and that the mystery of the kingdom, and the fellowship of the mystery, are things pertaining to the gospel of the kingdom in a special sense, but unknown until revealed to the apostles. The mysteries of the kingdom were placed on record in the sacred writings; but their signification was hidden from the prophets themselves, until "THE KEYS" thereof were vouchsafed to the apostles. Hence, says Peter, "of the salvation of souls the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the *grace* that should come *unto you*; searching into certain things, and what point of time the spirit of Christ which was in them ^{signified}, when it testified beforehand *the sufferings of Christ*, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that *not unto themselves*, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."²

The mystery of the kingdom, then, has been made known, and we find that it had relation to *the sufferings of the Christ; and repentance, remission of sins, and eternal life in his name, to the Jews first and afterwards to the Gentiles*. The prophets, who foretold these things, were not able to penetrate the mystery of them; and the angels, themselves, who brought the word to them, desired to understand them. But this was not permitted; and it was preserved as *a secret* until after the sufferings of Christ, which were to be the foundation of the manifestation.

When the "point of time" drew nigh for "the finishing of the transgression, the making an end of sin-offerings, the making reconciliation for iniquity, and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness,"³ Jesus, who had been anointed the Most

¹ Eph. iii. 3—10. ² 1 Pet. 1—10. ³ Dan. iv. 24.

